



## **MONTHLY REPORT MARCH 2019**

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### **Commercial and Recreational Fisheries**

- Two boats sank this month. One sank at the dock; no one was injured; no fuel was lost. The other sank during fishing operations with two fishermen on board. Thanks to the Harbormaster and Fire Dept.s both men were saved from the frigid waters in time. A small gasoline sheen quickly dissipated in the area. Three local vessels aided in the recovery of the sunken vessel the next morning and brought her to the boating ramp at the marina, and she went into dry dock.
- The Herring River area opened on Tuesday, March 19. Although more than two dozen people came out, it was a rather disappointing opening. The ice did damage, carrying away oysters and leaving the flats depleted. We are hoping that as the water warms, oysters will start pumping and feeding, and this will bring some that are covered over with sand now up to the surface.
- Indian Neck south of Omaha Landing continues to be fished by wild fishermen daily.
- With the time change and first day of spring, double tides began, meaning that the Shellfish Dept. patrols the flats twice a day, early mornings and late afternoons. This schedule will continue roughly every other week until about November.
- We worked with local fishermen, the Selectboard and our state biologist to conduct a bay scallop survey and to petition the Mass. Division of Marine Fisheries to extend the bay scallop season for two weeks.
- A rough, conservative estimate of commercial catches for the month is more than 184 bushels of oysters, 27 bushels of quahogs, 4-plus bushels of bay scallops and 13 bushels of blood clams were landed as tracked on commercial patrol.
- A few boats continue to bring in oysters, bay scallops and blood clams.
- So far, for 2019, we have sold 264 recreational permits, totaling \$15,700.
- We estimate that more than 11 bushels of oysters and 5 bushels of quahogs were harvested by recreational harvesters this month.

### **Enforcement**

- We observed a boat dragging inside the Indian Neck Recreational Only Area. We called the operator and informed him of the boundaries. The operator understood and left the area.
- We observed a fisherman on board a vessel in port culling shellfish at the L-Pier. This represented numerous infractions. We spoke at length with the captain about it, gave a verbal warning and wrote up an incident report.
- We have been having problems with new commercial permit holders taking too much seed. We have conducted educational conversations and given verbal warnings. We issued one written warning.
- We continue to check recreational shellfishermen oyster catches and throw back seed while educating them.
- We received a complaint about someone falling in tire tracks at Chipman's Cove. It was fishermen trying to recuperate aquaculture gear, and we corresponded with the person about this.

### **State and Town Relations**

- All three in the department attended the Mass. Shellfish Officers Assn. annual meeting in New Bedford, where Assistant Constable Johnny Mankevetch and Deputy Constable Chris Manulla

received the “Deputy Constables of the Year” award. A presentation will be made at an upcoming Selectboard meeting.

- We collected a plankton sample for the state and took state biologist out for water quality sampling.
- Constable Nancy Civetta attended a Shellfish Advisory Board meeting, a Municipal Vulnerability Planning Workshop, an Association to Preserve Cape Cod wastewater management presentation, an Open Meeting training, a Finance Committee meeting, a SPAT marketing meeting and three Selectboard meetings.
- Mankevetch and Manulla attended an MSI Assessments Committee meeting in New Bedford.
- Civetta went to a site visit with the Conservation Agent regarding a request to rebuild a sea wall in the Herring River shellfishing area.
- We met with EPO Adam Brightman, who began his assignment to Wellfleet, Eastham and Orleans, and took him on patrol.
- We assisted IFAW in rescuing dolphins a few times.

### **Propagation**

- The department got all of its racks and oysters back out onto its propagation bed by mid-month. The oysters did very well in the pits this winter and work continues to sort a few bags into lesser densities.
- We hosted an AmeriCorps day where they helped organize oysters on our propagation bed, make oysters bags and did other propagation activities.

### **Education**

- Civetta and Mankevetch attended the Mass. Shellfish Officers and State Shellfish Constable Training Course at Mass Maritime for two full weeks. They each passed the final exam with scores in the 90s and were awarded certificates.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nancy Civetta  
Shellfish Constable